

20 March 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Colonel White

SUBJECT : Training Support Services Personnel in Cable Writing Techniques

1. The following is a status report regarding the matter of a special program for training Support services personnel in cable writing techniques.

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2. I have consulted [redacted] Cable Secretary, and [redacted] Chief, Signal Center, for the purpose of ascertaining common deficiencies and errors in cables prepared within the Support services so that training provided would be of maximum effectiveness. Both [redacted] expressed the opinion that the cables originated within the Support Services are rather uniformly of high quality and that only very rarely do they receive a cable which evidences poor draftmanship. It seems from this that we have little or no need to teach Support services personnel how to compose economical cable messages.

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3. Considering the entire matter of efficiency in cable communications, there are two other areas where additional skill and understanding seem desirable. These are: first, when to use cable communication as distinguished from other methods, and second, the matter of curtailing the number of cable addressees by effecting distribution of messages to "Information Only" addressees by methods other than cable. With regard to the former, the governing rule will always be the matter of the time deadline for delivery of the message. With regard to the latter, there is a whole complex of factors having to do with the capabilities, limitations, standard techniques and methodologies of electronic communication. Since these latter factors are hardly known by most persons who must originate, coordinate or release cables, they can hardly apply good judgment in particular cases.

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4. I have not been able to be in touch with the OIR instructor who is putting together the 3½ hours for the DD/P since he has been ill for several days. I have learned that the DD/P program will be handled

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principally by [redacted] will be offering guidance as to what kinds of operational situations really merit cable traffic in preference to pouch, while [redacted] will be offering orientation in the various other factors which effect cable economy; i.e., the matter of abbreviations, use of foreign language phrases, unnecessary information addressees, etc.

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5. [redacted] will be most happy to provide Support services personnel with the same kind of orientation he will be furnishing DD/P personnel, and is willing to do it either on a common group basis (as in the case of DD/P), or office by office. Guidance as to the kinds of operational support situations which warrant use of cable communication should be provided by someone of reasonable stature in the Support services; that is to say, someone who would enjoy in the Support services a stature comparable to that of [redacted] in the Clandestine Services.

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If we can rely on [redacted] we have no real need to give instruction in cable drafting but we could require that Support services personnel undergoing this training prepare for the undertaking by reading once more the Cable Handbook [redacted]. This would serve also as a basis for those participating to formulate questions which would be answered by those conducting the training.

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6. At the present time, I favor offering this training to each of the Support services separately. This would permit bringing together at one time personnel originating, coordinating and releasing cables on any given topic, e.g., Logistics, and should encourage a very effective training situation. I am not yet certain of the number of persons who would be involved in each of the components but estimate that no component would have so many as to preclude this approach.

7. I will welcome your thoughts on this and would like an opportunity to discuss the matter with you before taking further action.

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